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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 000748

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: GOES SANGUINE ON COLOMBIA DCA; FM TO HONDURAS

REF: STATE 82581

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: Salvadoran FM Martinez welcomed reftel points on the proposed U.S.-Colombia Defense Cooperation Agreement. Separately, he has been asked by OAS SG Insulza to join the planned mission of Foreign Ministers to Honduras o/a August 21, partly as a counter-balance to Panama. End Summary.

12. (C) Salvadoran FM Hugo Martinez told Emboffs August 12 that during his visit to Quito for President Correa's swearing in, there had been significant discussion "especially from some countries to the south" of the proposed Defense Cooperation Agreement between Colombia and the U.S., much of it negative. He welcomed reftel points on the scope and intent of the proposed DCA. (Note: Charge briefed Defense Minister Munguia Payes August 10, who was similarly receptive to our position.) Martinez said the GOES public line, if asked, would be that this agreement is a sovereign prerogative of the GOC while acknowledging that it has caused some concern by Colombia's neighbors.

13. (C) Privately, he said, the GOES recognizes that El Salvador recently extended its own agreement with the U.S. governing access to the Comalapa Cooperative Security Location (CSL) and has no concerns with the proposed Colombian agreement. Martinez said his personal opinion was that the Colombian announcement of these negotiations was poorly timed, given already strained relations with Ecuador and Venezuela and allegations of Venezuelan arms finding their way to FARC rebels. Martinez said President Funes is tentatively planning an official visit to Colombia September 17-18.

14. (C) Turning to Honduras, Martinez told us he had received a call from OAS SG Insulza during Salvadoran holidays in early August, and again while in Quito, seeking his participation in the OAS-organized mission of Foreign Ministers to Honduras. Martinez said he had told Insulza, with support from President Funes, he would be willing to participate if Insulza thought it would be useful, but did not want to contribute to a climate where FM's were competing to join the mission. He said Insulza was apparently trying to balance Panama's inclusion in the mission (along with Canada, Mexico and Chile) with El Salvador, since Panama had officially received representatives of the de facto Micheletti regime. Martinez said the FM's expected to travel to Honduras on or about August 21, after the mid-week visit by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Martinez said the GOES position on Honduras continued to be essentially the same as the U.S. position and he noted the positive statements made on Honduras by NAFTA leaders in Guadalajara.

15. (C) Comment: The GOES clearly does not want to wade into

the spat over Colombia's DCA and hopes the issue will fade away before Funes' planned trip to Colombia, nor do they want to draw unnecessary attention to the CSL, which enjoys broad GOES support, and excellent mil-to-mil coordination. Similarly, Martinez is trying to contribute to a resolution of the Honduras crisis without adding to the noise surrounding the Foreign Ministers' visit. End Comment.
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